

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCCT-01 SAB-01 OMB-01 /067 W

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O R 120953Z MAR 76 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6700

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1428

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA REACTION TO LEBANESE COUP ATTEMPT

1. SYRIAN MEDIA HAVE AS YET GIVEN NO CLUE AS TO SYRIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD ATTEMPTED COUP BY LEBANESE MILITARY. COVERAGE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF PREVIOUS DAY'S EVENTS. EARLY MORNING DAMASCUS RADIO BRIEFLY REPORTED THAT BRIG. AHDAB HAD APPEARED ON BEIRUT TELEVISION TO REQUEST FRANGIE'S RESIGNATION, AND THAT FRANGIE REJECTED THIS IN MIDNIGHT RADIO STATEMENT. SYRIAN PRESS, ON OTHER HAND, PUBLISHED TEXT OF AHDAB'S STATEMENT, CITED BEIRUT RADIO'S BROADCAST OF CABLES OF SUPPORT FOR AHDAB BY VARIOUS MILITARY FIGURES, AND PRINTED FRANGIE'S STATEMENT. AL-BAATH CITED COMMENTARY BY NEWS AGENCIES THAT COUP RESULTED FROM "DEADLOCK" IN LEBANESE SITUATION.

2.SANA RELEASED STATEMENT NOTING THAT ASAD HAD MET WITH KHADDAM, JAMIL AND SHIHABI AT 1915 MARCH
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11 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON THEIR LATEST NEGOTIATING

EFFORTS. SYRIAN DELEGATION HAD MET EARLIER IN DAY WITH FRANGIE, KARAME, CHAMOUN AND OTHERS TO DISCUSS "SERIOUS CRISIS RESULTING FROM SPLITS IN ARMY." SANA MENTIONED THAT SHIHABI HAD GONE TO BEIRUT THAT MORNING AND HAD MET WITH LEBANESE ARMY LEADERSHIP BEFORE JOINING DISCUSSIONS AT BAABDA PALACE. SANA REPORTED THAT DAMASCUS HAD CONTACTED LEBANESE PRESIDENCY AND MILITARY COMMAND AFTER AHDAB'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO "ASCERTAIN SITUATION."

3. COMMENT BY SEPTTEL.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC01428
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760094-0080
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760368/aaaachom.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUL 2004 by vandyklc>; APPROVED <30 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN MEDIA REACTION TO LEBANESE COUP ATTEMPT
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE
To: STATE BEIRUT
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006